

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Interagency Council on Homelessness



Notes from the Meeting of the Interagency Council of Homelessness (ICH)

Date and Time: January 12, 2010 2:00pm to 3:30pm
Location: Thrive DC, 1525 Newton St NW, Washington, DC 20032
Approximate Attendance: 87

Welcome and Introductions

Neil O. Albert, City Administrator (CA), called the meeting to order and then opened the meeting for comments from the public.

Public Comment Period

- There was a comment made regarding the District's Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness; the speaker informed all attendees that we are currently halfway through the 10 year plan, and the plan includes no information pertaining to employment for the homeless. The speaker plans to gauge the District's efforts to meet the goals of the plan.
- A speaker expressed her concern about the lack of social workers located at the District's shelters. The speaker was instructed to speak with an identified DHS representative.
- There was a comment made in regard to the lack of hot water at the NY Ave shelter. Mr. Albert assured the speaker that the hot water problem at NY Ave shelter has been addressed.

Summary of the Discussion from the Pre-Meeting Focus Groups-Schroeder Stribling, Deputy Executive Director, N Street Village

- A focus group (round table) was held prior to the ICH meeting so that key issues could be discussed in detail by members of the homeless community with the findings or conclusions of the discussions presented at the subsequent ICH meeting. This input is sought in order to inform the planning process of the ICH and its committees. More than 30 individuals participated in this session.
- Participants were asked to reflect on specific questions or topics and to offer their input and perspectives through both small group conversations and in written comments. These questions were discussed:

Topic: Employment

1. What are some of the most significant barriers facing persons who are homeless related to employment?
2. What are some of the most important individual support services that are needed regarding employment (both before and after an individual gains employment)?
3. What employment programs or supports are necessary to enable individuals to move out of homelessness?
 - A few themes that emerged from the conversations about Employment were:
 - There are an inadequate number of facilities that allow homeless persons to utilize showers before participating in interviews.
 - Resources that provide homeless with the proper work attire is needed.
 - There is a need to increase the availability of transportation for homeless persons that are seeking employment.
 - Additional job counseling programs that include life skills seminars and peer mentoring would be a very important individual support service for homeless job seekers.
 - Periodic trainings and job fairs conducted by the Department of Employment Services that focus on the needs of the homeless job seekers would assist with enabling individuals to move out of homelessness.
 - First month rental assistance and additional low income housing opportunities are needed.

Topic: Access and Coordination

1. What is the best way to efficiently and accurately connect individuals who are accessing the homeless Continuum of Care to the resources they want or need?
 - A few themes that emerged from the conversations about Employment were:
 - A centrally located assessment, referral and service center for the homeless is needed.
 - A homeless resource guide that highlights all resources and services available to homeless individuals in the District would be needed.
 - Each question was discussed in facilitated sub-groups, and summaries of the conversations, input, and ideas generated were provided by each group. Schroeder Stribling, Deputy Executive Director, N Street Village, gave a summary of the results of the discussions to the assembled ICH, and a written summary is also available.

US Census Presentation

Sharon Dobson, a representative from the US Census Bureau announced that the US Census Bureau is currently recruiting temporary, part-time census takers for the 2010 Census.

Important Information:

- Census takers earn \$20 an hour
- Each applicant is required to complete and pass a 30 minute skills test and must have 2 forms of identification.
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Census representatives are willing to come out to shelters and administer skills tests to groups (must be at least 20 test takers present)

For more information please contact, Sharon Dobson (202) 507-4560

Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Budget Update

- Laura Zeilinger announced that on December 31, 2009 DHS submitted an application to the federal government that would provide DHS \$46 million from the TANF Contingency Fund. Once a decision is made by the federal government a public announcement will be made.

ICH Committee Reports

Steering Committee-Scott McNeilly, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless (WLCH)

- The Steering Committee announced that all 2010 ICH meeting dates and locations have been confirmed (Information regarding upcoming dates and locations were made available at this meeting).
- This committee is also looking at ways to utilize the ICH website to communicate information on upcoming meetings as well as informing the homeless population of available resources in the District; in addition, the Steering Committee has made it a priority to ensure that information that is provided in Pre-Meeting discussions are considered and implemented.

Operations and Logistics Committee- Chapman Todd, Catholic Charities

- The Operations and Logistics Committee invited representatives from the US Census to a November meeting to get a sense of what their plan was regarding the counting of homeless in the District. The committee was informed that the US Census will conduct a count of homeless persons over a three day period:

March 29- Count of people in shelters

March 30- Count of mobile food vans and food programs

March 31-Count of homeless persons on the street

- This committee has also been following the progress of the implementation of the 2009-2010 Winter Plan; in addition, hypothermia cards were submitted throughout the District, and if any additional information is needed regarding these cards please contact George Shephard (202) 299-2152.
- There was initial concern regarding a lack of family capacity beds that were included in the winter plan; however DHS has communicated with the committee as well as others that they are expanding to meet the growing need, and an additional facility is online.

Strategic Planning-Kelly Sweeney-McShane, Executive Director, Community of Hope

- This committee has been researching other jurisdictions strategic plans, specifically Denver, Colorado and Portland, Oregon. The committee split into subcommittees to look at areas of focus regarding the strategic plan document:
 - Employment- What is currently available? Next steps?
 - Outcomes-What do we as a city want to measure? How will we track the progress?
 - Permanent Housing- Current status? Next steps?
 - Resources around Public and Private Partnerships
 - Families- What is the need?

Presentation on Facility Protocols/ Work Order Processes

Sue Marshall (The Community Partnership) gave an overview of the new shelter facility protocols:

1. Work orders are generated by the Shelter Home facilities and submitted to the Community Partnership (TCP).
2. The Community Partnership (TCP) reviews the work orders to determine if they require nonstructural or structural repairs.
3. Nonstructural repairs are performed by the Community Partnership.
 - The Community Partnership (TCP) performs a walk through with the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to beginning work.
4. Structural repairs are performed by the Department of Real Estate Services (DRES).
 - Structural work orders are assessed and a notice indicating timeframe of repair is posted within a twelve (12) hour period.
 - DRES performs a walk through with DHS prior to beginning work.
 - Completion of work orders is contingent upon parts availability.
5. DHS monitors work progress from beginning to completion.
6. DHS inspects final work and upon DHS' approval, work order is considered closed.

7. For emergencies, Shelter Home Facilities shall contact Mayor's Command Center, 311. The command center will contact DRES

Nonstructural

Light bulbs	Broken windows
Door locks	Clogged toilets, sinks
Leaking faucets	Replace damage floor coverings
Interior painting	Drywalling
Interior plastering	Holes in walls and ceilings
Ceiling tile replacement	Ceramic tile replacement
Moving and hauling	Replacing electrical outlets, covers
Installation of fixtures	

Structural

HVAC system	Boilers
Roof repairs	Elevators
Electrical	Structural damage to buildings

**** A copy of the Facility Work Order Process is available on the DHS website, dhs.dc.gov****

2010 Point in Time (PIT) Presentation

Tom Fredericksen informed the group that the 2010 Point in Time (PIT) Enumeration will take place on January 27, 2010 from 9pm-2am.

The purpose of the PIT is to obtain a count of homeless and formerly homeless persons in the District of Columbia on a single day. Data used from the PIT will also be used to identify gaps in the Continuum of Care and assist with planning for future homeless service programs.

Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and (FY) 2010 Federal Budget Appropriations Updates

- Laura Zeilinger informed the committee that the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) kicked off on December 1, 2009. There are 4 eligibility providers who set up appointments to assist applicants with re-housing.
- It was also announced that the Department of Human Services received a \$17 million appropriation for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH); DHS is currently preparing RFPs for housing of PSH units. As a result of the this recent appropriation, approximately 365 individuals and 150 families will be housed.

Overview of Thrive DC

Thrive DC was originally founded in 1979 as the Dinner Program for Homeless Women. Thrive DC is an independent, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that works to prevent and end homelessness by providing vulnerable individuals with a comprehensive range of services to help stabilize their lives. Thrive DC provides the last available safety net for people facing economic crisis and housing instability while also providing the first step towards independence for people experiencing extended periods of homelessness.

Public Comment Period

- A speaker asked if there is a way to update an existing PSH survey; Fred Swan informed the speaker that as a part of the new PSH funding additional outreach will be provided that will allow for updates of existing PSH surveys.
- Concerns were raised regarding the number of homeless persons that are on the waiting list to receive housing.
- A speaker wanted to thank everyone for their hard work in the fight against homelessness.
- There was a question regarding the number of PSH surveys that have been completed since the program was initiated; the speaker was advised that over 4,000 surveys have been completed.
- There was a question regarding the number of non government members are permitted to serve on the ICH. The speaker was advised that 2-5 non government members are permitted.